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Rewriting the Holocaust: Where the Far Right Meets the Far Left

Darryl Cooper, a right-wing pseudohistorian, is making outrageous claims, when left-wing and Islamist antisemitism are at an all-time high.

By Kathleen Hayes

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Tucker Carlson finally, more than two hours into the interview, has a thought. “A lot of what we hear about World War II is a lie,” he agrees. “But I’m totally happy to say the Nazis were bad. I think they were. I’m totally happy to say the United States was the most virtuous player among the three [Allies].”

“But you’re not talking about a historical event,” his guest, internet historian Darryl Cooper, responds. “You’re talking about a myth.”

It’s one of many jaw-dropping, and chilling, exchanges between two intelligent men with vast followings. Among Cooper’s claims: Winston Churchill was “a psychopath … the chief villain of the Second World War.” Hitler repeatedly signaled for peace but was provoked into war by a bellicose Britain. Germany launched its war on the East “with no plan to care for the millions and millions of civilians and prisoners of war that were going to come under [their] control. And millions of people died because of that.” Yes, they “died,” victims of atypically poor Teutonic planning. But what’s especially incredible about this exchange is the failure even to mention the Holocaust, use the word “genocide,” or allude at all to Jewish suffering in World War II. The Jews do make an appearance elsewhere in the conversation, however, as the financiers to whom evil Churchill was beholden; and in a later segment, there’s the claim that the Jews of Jerusalem murdered Jesus, “uniting around the need to eliminate this victim.” Carlson calls the Nuremberg Trials a “farce,” and Cooper calls them “that sacrificial ritual that was the founding event of the current global order” — a ritual similar, he ever-so-subtly hints, to the scapegoating and martyrdom of Jesus. When Cooper calls it a “myth” that the Nazis were bad, he wants us to think he’s using the word not as virtually everybody understands it — as a widely held belief that is false — but in a more sophisticated, nuanced sense. The pretense is threadbare. He really believes, and is telling his millions of listeners, that the wrong side won in World War II.

In July, Cooper responded on X to the Olympics opening ceremony by juxtaposing two images of Paris. The black-and-white photo on the left shows Hitler with coterie strutting before the Eiffel Tower; the photo on the right depicts the Olympics opening ceremony, a

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of the Last Supper. The performance was not only insulting to Christians, but revolting to the many who feel Western civilization is under siege. For Cooper, however, defending the West against such leftist provocations means resurrecting Hitler's war on what he called "Jewish Bolshevism."

"This may be putting it too crudely for some," Cooper writes, "but the picture on the left [Hitler] was infinitely preferable in virtually every way than the picture on the right." America's "best and most popular historian" (per Carlson) is literally saying the world would be a better place if the Nazis had won.

As I listened to this Nazi apologist from the far right, I was struck by how many of his core beliefs dovetail with those of the far left. I'll limit myself to four. There's the fanatical hatred of Winston Churchill — the man who most intrepidly spearheaded the war on Nazism, and whose statue near London's Parliament is regularly defaced by leftists who call him an "imperialist pig" and, of course, a Zionist. There's the claim that World War II was merely a showdown between great power rivals, not a war to defend democracy — which is seen as a mere sham — against the terrible menace of fascism. There's the consistent playing up of war crimes committed by the Allies and concomitant playing down of much greater ones committed by the Axis powers. And, inevitably, there's the depiction of Jews as villains and the disappearance of Jewish victimhood. Whether far right or far left, everyone can agree: The face of evil is Jewish.

At pro-Hamas protests today, there's a concerted effort to turn World War II on its head, reversing victims and villains with the aim of chipping away at Israel's foundation. "Israel = Nazis," protesters claim, and "Gaza is the new Warsaw Ghetto." On placards Netanyahu, the supreme Jew, is given a Hitler mustache. Trotskyist demonstrators hawk newspapers proclaiming both their opposition to antisemitism, and the claim that Zionists collaborated with Hitler so were really, in a sense, responsible for the Holocaust. Some argue, like Cooper, that the "Final Solution" was basically (whoops!) an accidental consequence of the war on the Soviet Union; the more Stalinist-minded wrap themselves in a sense of virtue by proclaiming their love for the much-suffering Soviet Union, the chief enemy of Nazism and savior of the Jews. (This breed also, of course, smoothly explains away the Stalin-Hitler pact.) Speakers from podiums scream that the Palestinians today are undergoing a Holocaust, while on countless placards the Star of David is partnered with the swastika, twin symbols of evil, and marchers with Jewish Voice for Peace lament the Jews' transformation into those who victimized them. The assault on history proceeds day by day.

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When history gets butchered — when people mutilate what events of the past mean, overturn society's understanding of right and wrong, of who played a heroic role and who a monstrous one — real-life butchery in the future looks more and more likely. That's why it's particularly disturbing that Cooper, a right-wing pseudohistorian, is making his outrageous claims now, when left-wing and Islamist antisemitism are at an all-time high. A war over World War II is being fought all over again — not the war itself, but its legacy — and the Jews are again in the crucible, caught between two camps who loathe each other but hate the Jews more. Instead of "Never Again" it's: Ever Again.

Kathleen Hayes *is the author of "Antisemitism and the Left: A Memoir."*

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